

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0301
March 20, 2017

Mr. Doug Lamont
Acting Assistant Secretary for the Army (Civil Works)
108 Pentagon (Army)
Washington, DC 20310-0108

The Honorable Mick Mulvaney
Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Acting Assistant Secretary Lamont and Director Mulvaney:

We are writing to express our strong support for the Rio de Flag flood control project in Flagstaff, Arizona. Its completion is critical to the public safety and economic viability of the City of Flagstaff. We would be remiss if we didn't personally thank the Corps and OMB for their help in helping to secure the recently signed LRR that allows the project to be reauthorized as a part of the Water Resources Development Act/Water Infrastructure Improvements Act for the Nation (WRDA/WIIN) last year.

Specifically, we are asking you to fund the project at \$1 million in the fiscal year (FY) 2017 work plan to complete 100 percent design and allow for Corps review of the Arizona Department of Transportation's (ADOTs) bridge design at B-40 and Route 66 that is expected to be constructed as part of the overall project in FY 2018.

A significant flood event would directly affect more than half of Flagstaff's population of approximately 70,000 and would result in damages to approximately 1,500 structures valued at over \$916,000,000. For the last 30 years, the City of Flagstaff's top priority has been to mitigate potential flood damage caused by the Rio de Flag. Since FY 2002, the Rio de Flag flood control project has received more than \$25 million in federal appropriations – between \$1 million and \$5.486 million annually for various phases of the project. With these resources, the USACE has conducted the reconnaissance and feasibility studies, completed the pre-construction engineering and design (PED), and begun the construction phase. In terms of construction, the Clay Avenue Wash Detention Basin (CAWDB) has been built and the lower reach is in the process of being built. Until the lower reach is completed up to the confluence where the upper and lower reach meet, there are few tangible benefits to this project because no one will be taken out of the flood plain.

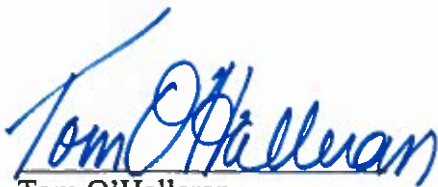
As you may know, completion of the 100 percent design is the top priority for the City. There are many tangible benefits to completion of these designs. First, the project will have a design certain, which will lower certain contingencies on the project that are as high as 40 percent. It is estimated that 23 percent of the project's current overall costs are contingencies. 100 percent design plans will eliminate some of the additional contingency costs and lower the overall

contingencies to an estimated 15 percent or less. In turn, this would increase the BCR above its current 1.78:1 allowing it to compete better nationally for annual funding. Second, completion of 100 percent design will permit the City to finalize property acquisition, design of utility relocations and bridge design. This will allow for larger elements of the project to be constructed in the near future. Third, 100 percent design will allow the City to engage the BNSF Railroad to help construct a bridge over the confluence of the Upper and Lower Reach of the project. BNSF refuses to discuss this until the 100 percent designs are completed. Finally, completion of these 100 percent designs will allow for completion of the hydraulic models and will allow for final value engineering (VE) on the project that could further reduce costs thus further increasing the BCR.

Slowing this project would be irresponsible and a waste of precious taxpayer dollars already expended that could result in huge losses of property and/or the loss of life. That is why we support – and expect – a more robust and aggressive funding schedule for this project after the recently completed Limited Reevaluation Report (LRR). Therefore, we respectfully request that the USACE include \$1 million for the Rio de Flag project in the FY 2017 work plan to address these critical needs.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. As always, we ask that this matter be handled in strict accordance with the existing agency rules, regulations, and ethical guidelines. If you have any question or concerns, please feel free to contact Paul Babbitt (O'Halleran) at (202) 225-3361 or Trevor Pearson (Gosar) at (202) 225-2315 in our Washington, D.C. offices.

Sincerely,



Tom O'Halleran
Member of Congress



Paul A. Gosar, D.D.S.
Member of Congress